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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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I wish to express strong concern over this revised settlement between yourselves and Microsoft. I agree with many who feel that many of the statements made within the settlement are insufficiently stringent to make them effective.

Taking the example of the invocation of Microsoft Middleware:

Microsoft "the Windows Operating System Product may invoke a
Microsoft Middleware Product in any instance in which: 1. that
Microsoft Middleware Product would be invoked solely for use in
inter-operating
with a server maintained by Microsoft..."

Though a welcome initiative, and though it does specifically exclude web browsers from this context, the detail through this and subsequent paragraphs exposes many simple means by which, for example, microsoft can force the use of its own e-mail client, authentication services etc... Particularly of note in providing these loopholes are the above exclusion and the active-x related exclusion. On the whole, use of active-x to access such services achieves slick-looking integration, not extra functionality.

Many people, including myself choose to avoid microsoft applications providing these services, both through personal preference and through concern over the number of serious security vulnerabilities that have been exposed in these products over the past few years. Allowing Microsoft to take this route may well result in a similar situation to the Internet Explorer v Netscape saga for a host of other services.

Yours sincerely

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